



Minot Air Force Base  
Parent / Student  
School Bus Policy  
For On-Base Schools

**School Year 2012/2013**



## School Bus Service

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

[illegible]

Please direct any questions to the Minot AFB School Liaison Officer (SLO) at 723-1447.

# Parental Complaint Form

## School Bus Service

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Your phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

School: \_\_\_\_\_ Bus number: \_\_\_\_\_

Incident or complaint, please be specific. Provide time, location, and all circumstances of your complaint. Include the names of any witnesses you have.

e. In extreme cases, the child may be asked to appear before the Juvenile Review Board.

f. All requests for reinstatement or appeals concerning disciplinary action can be addressed to my office in writing. Coordination can be arranged by calling 723-2205.

5. Bus drivers are obligated to provide a safe environment for your children, to obey the traffic laws, and to be courteous in their dealings with you and your children. Should a situation arise where you believe the bus driver is not fulfilling his or her responsibilities, I ask you to record your complaint or concern in writing and forward to me so we can investigate. Within this pamphlet there is a complaint form for you to use. You may also obtain a form from either the school or the SLO. If the situation is urgent, please feel free to call the SLO or my office.

6. If you have questions or concerns, please contact me at 723-2205 or the Minot AFB SLO at 723-1447.

William Paul M

WILLIAM P. MAZZENO, Colonel, USAF  
Commander, 5th Mission Support Group

Please direct any questions to the Minot AFB School Liaison Officer (SLO) at 723-1447.

## Frequently Asked Questions

During past informational meetings, parents asked a number of excellent questions. Here are the answers to the most commonly asked questions. We hope we have captured most of your questions. However, if you have additional questions, please contact the School Liaison Officer at 723-1447, Mon-Fri from 0700-1630.

### a. Can parents ride the bus with their children? How would this be coordinated?

- **Answer:** Questions about having a chaperone or a bus-aide to keep control of the students while on the bus are often asked. Northland Bus Company has no problem with a parent who would like to ride a bus on occasion to help. Northland believes this will allow for better understanding of what the drivers are required to do, how they should act, and the extent of disciplinary problems. Parents wishing to ride on the bus are required to provide, in writing, a request at least 7 calendar days in advance. Please include your address in your request. This is needed to let the bus company ensure there is enough room on the bus and to let the driver know they will be picking up a parent at a particular stop. The parent must realize his/her presence on the bus is as an observer, not as a disciplinarian. The bus driver is in charge.

### b. Are seat belts required to be on school buses in North Dakota?

- **Answer:** There is no federal law requiring school buses to have seat belts. A state may enact a law requiring them, however North Dakota has no such law. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), school bus transportation is one of the safest forms of transportation on highways in the United States. School bus crash data shows that a federal requirement for belts would provide little, if any, added protection in an accident. The National Transportation Safety Board and the National Academy of Sciences have come to the same conclusion. Rather than requiring seat belts, the NHTSA has concluded that the best way to provide crash protection to passengers is through a concept called "compartmentalization" where a protective envelope consisting of strong, closely spaced seats that have energy-absorbing seat backs provides occupant crash protection. Small school buses with a gross vehicle weight less than 10,000 lbs. must be equipped with lap/shoulder belts at all designated seating positions. All buses operated by Northland Bus Company meet federal regulations in this area.

### c. What will the bus drivers do with a child when there is no parent at home when the bus drops them off?

- **Answer:** A parent raised this question because of concern over schools closing early due to bad weather. Parents should have an emergency point of contact and phone number on file with the schools. In addition, a form may be filled out stating an alternate plan for where to drop off the children in this situation. If a parent is not home, the bus driver will contact the school and they will call the emergency contact or provide a drop off point based on the alternate plan if one is on file.

### d. What can be done to coordinate a student riding a different bus to or from school?

- **Answer:** This question addresses the need for a child to ride from school to a different location, other than his/her normal stop or bus. Usually this is for children attending scout meetings or going to a daycare provider, etc. We developed a request form and a copy is included in the School Bus Guidance package. It requires specific information about the student as well as the parent's, a school official's, and the bus driver's signatures.



Please print in the box below each item and have all signatures.

Students Name	Parent/Guardian	Phone Number
School	Bus # Student Normally Rides	Bus # Student is Requested to Ride (if you know)
Request Change for Pickup or Drop-off (designate which one)	Address of New or Different Location	Days The Student Will Ride the Different Bus (i.e. every Mon & Wed or 1 Dec - 20 Dec)
Parent's Signature	Teacher's Signature	Bus Driver's Signature

Please return this request slip to your child's teacher as soon as you know there is a need for them to ride a different bus. This is to assist in accommodating parents and students who have the need to be dropped off or picked up at a location that is not their "normal assigned stop." (Dropped off at a day care provider, scouts, etc.)



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# SCHOOL BUS INFRACTION EXAMPLES

## Major Infractions

- Smoking or possession of tobacco.
- Vandalism.
- Possession of or being under the influence of alcohol and or drugs.
- Fighting or physical contact.
- Riding the bus during suspension of privileges.
- Throwing objects on the bus.
- Possession of a weapon.
- Acts which endanger the safety of all or any passengers or the driver.

## Minor Infractions

- Not following the instructions of the driver.
- Not staying in your seat.
- Standing while the bus is in motion.
- Extending body parts out of windows.
- Eating, drinking, or spitting.
- Profanity, yelling, screaming or name calling (harassment).
- Taking other people's property.
- Not keeping hands or feet to themselves.

Any and all infractions will be punished under the rules set forth by the 5 MSG/CC stated in the guidance memorandum at the beginning of this booklet.

e. Will bus service be provided for students who live in one district, and attend school in a different district?

- **Answer:** Additional stops outside of the school district will not be added. The student can catch the bus at the nearest stop in their district. However, this requires the student to walk to that stop or be driven by a parent or guardian.

f. Do students get assigned seating or can assigned seating be requested?

- **Answer:** As a rule, there is not assigned seating on the buses. Kindergarten students do get seated in the front of the bus. Parents can also ask the bus driver if their child can ride in the front of the bus. A driver may decide to assign seats for discipline problems.

g. How is early school closure notification done in the event of bad weather?

- **Answer:** This will be done in the same manner that late openings will be done. Minot Air Force Base Public Affairs social media, Minot AFB's HOTLINE 723-1190, and the base e-mail will be the prime sources of notification. Recall alerting is another option. Local radio and news channels will also be notified, but they will not be as timely as calling the HOTLINE 723-1190.

h. Who controls behavior at bus stops?

- **Answer:** If there is a problem at a bus stop with unruly students, the Law Enforcement Desk should be notified at 723-3096. If the problem continues, and Law Enforcement (LE) cannot remedy the situation, notify the Minot Air Force Base School Liaison Officer at 723-1447 or the 5th Mission Support Group (5 MSG) at 723-2205, for assistance.

i. What are the bus schedules when there is a delayed opening?

- **Answer:** Buses start running 30 minutes prior to the start of school for delayed openings. See schedule below:

### *Delayed Opening Schedules*

#### ***Buses start for North Plains at 9:30 A.M.***

##### **North Plains:**

10:00 A.M. - 3:40 P.M. (All students)

#### ***Buses start for Dakota at 10:00 A.M.***

##### **Dakota:**

10:30 A.M. - 4:10 P.M.

#### ***Buses start for Memorial at 10:30 AM***

##### **Memorial:**

11:00 A.M. - 4:50 P.M.

**j. Do vehicles need to stop for school buses loading and unloading on base?**

- **Answer:** Yes, all traffic in both directions must stop for buses while loading and unloading children. The bus will operate the flashers to alert traffic. On base, the bus drivers can report the violator's license number to the 5th Security Forces Squadron LE Desk, 723-3096, or the 5 MSG at 723-2205. Offending individuals will be contacted and risk losing base driving privileges. Off base, drivers report incidents directly to the North Dakota Highway Patrol and offenders will receive a traffic ticket in the mail.

**k. Why is Northland Bus Co. stopping in crosswalks in front of North Plains School?**

- **Answer:** This was initiated to ensure the safety of students. By parking the buses within 6-inches of one another, this keeps students from walking between them into passing traffic. The Supervisor of Transportation for Minot Public Schools permits them to park in this manner.

**l. What else can I expect after bus service starts?**

- **Answer:** We usually receive nearly 200 additional requests for bus transportation after the cutoff date. Northland Bus Company will try to accommodate those requests and appreciates your patience as individual schedules change. You should see things beginning to stabilize about 2 weeks after buses begin to run. Additionally, we usually experience a few "lost children" during our first week of operation. In some cases, the child does not know where to get off the bus and cannot give the driver a home address. When this occurs, drivers have been instructed to return the child to the school and the school will contact the parent or guardian. Parents can help us by ensuring young children have an address tag or identification with a home address to assist the driver in ensuring the child gets to the appropriate destination.

## **RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES**

### **PARENTS**

- The purpose of school bus transportation is to provide safe, comfortable and economical transportation for the *school children* of the base. Parents may ride the bus provided they follow the established guidelines discussed in the Frequently Asked Questions.
- Parents are responsible for having their children ready and on time. Parents are responsible to get their children to and from the bus.
- Children must be dressed properly for the season. In winter, warm clothing and winter boots should be worn. Following school guidelines for clothing is typically sufficient.
- Parents will ensure the cooperation of the children by studying with them and reinforcing the rules and regulations adopted for school bus operation. Parents must understand that children riding on a school bus will obey all regulations and the requests of the driver or they may forfeit their privileges of riding the bus.
- Parents should use their own judgment as to school attendance on days of inclement weather.
- Children should not be sent to school when they are known to be ill.
- School bus drivers shall not be expected to wait more than one (1) minute at a pickup point.
- Students will be picked up and dropped off only at *their* designated bus stop.

### **STUDENTS**

- The driver is in charge of the bus.
- Follow directions the first time they are given.
- Stay in your seat.
- Keep all parts of your body inside the bus.
- No pushing, shoving or fighting at any time.
- No eating or smoking.
- No harassing, rude or obscene language.
- Be courteous to everyone at all times.
- Do not destroy property.
- Keep personal items out of the aisle.

The obligation of the bus driver is to provide for the safe transportation of all passengers. The bus driver is the "Commander" of the bus; all persons riding the bus are expected to obey the driver's directions the first time they are given.